

## *Embarrassed Composer*

**R**ACHMANINOFF, the great composer, having played his own concerto at the Queen's Hall last night with the utmost coolness, suddenly became the picture of embarrassment when the Duchess of Atholl stepped on to the platform to present him with a gold medal.

Since the Duchess, usually an excellent speaker, was on this occasion completely inaudible, even to those sitting in the third row of the stalls, and since Rachmaninoff, having uttered exactly one word, which I failed to catch, decided not to speak at all, the little ceremony was hardly impressive.

But Sir Henry Wood stood by as a sort of guardian angel, and there was plenty of enthusiasm.

## *Strange Preference*

When he wishes to do so, Rachmaninoff can, as a matter of fact, speak excellent English. He has spent much time in America, and first visited this country nearly thirty years ago.

In a state of sympathetic indignation I once asked him what he thought of the unspeakable vandalism of turning his immortal Prelude in C sharp minor into a fox-trot.

"I prefer it like that," he replied.

\*  
\*  
\*